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Andrews University Welcomes New Faculty

Verlyn Benson and Merlin Burt have recently joined the Andrews University (AU) faculty.

As of July 2004, Benson is the new dean of the College of Technology. He comes to AU from Pacific Union College (PUC) where he taught in the department of technology for sixteen years, serving as chair since 2002. Before teaching at PUC, Benson was the director of the technical school at what is now Bolivia Adventist University from 1981–1987.

Benson received his undergraduate degree in industrial technology from PUC and his masters in industrial technology, with an emphasis in graphics, from California Polytechnic University in 1987. He received his doctorate of industrial technology degree from the University of Northern Iowa in 1998. While studying for his doctorate, Benson worked as a graduate assistant doing research for John Deere's engine division.

As dean, Benson wants to focus on how AU can better communicate and relate with the community, helping the university grow to become a leader in technological education among Adventist institutions. Benson joins the AU community with his wife, Anita, and their two children.

Merlin Burt joined the AU faculty last fall as the director of the Center for Adventist Research when the Ellen G. White Estate and the Adventist Heritage Center came together under joint administration in November 2003. He was director for the Ellen G. White Estate Branch Office at Loma Linda University from 1993–2003. Burt comes to AU with his wife, Sarah, and their three children.

Burt received his Ph.D. in Religion from AU in 2003 with a focus on Adventist studies and American church history and a cognate in archives.

Since Burt's arrival, an endowment fund has been started with the hope of supporting future outreach programs and expansion.



Verlyn Benson, dean of the College of Technology



Merlin Burt, director of the Center for Adventist Research

A new website has also been created: <http://www.andrews.edu/library/car/index.html>, and a scholars program has been instituted, which allows registered scholars of Adventist church history and Ellen G. White the chance to study at the Center.

Burt states his "biggest desire is to help Seventh-day Adventists appreciate the movement and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by seeing how God has led in the past."

Beverly Stout, University Relations news writer

Teacher in the Spotlight

Just strike up a conversation with Kathy Demsky and it will soon become apparent how much she loves her job, and the students she interacts with in her position as director of the Architecture Resource Center at Andrews University (AU).

"Students are everything. They come first," Demsky explains. "They're my second family."

Demsky moved to AU with her husband, Conrad, from Gentry, Arkansas, in the mid 1980s. Her library talents were soon discovered, and she was recruited to begin working in the architecture library in July 1987. Before she even finished her undergraduate degree, Demsky became director of the Architecture Resource Center in 1989.

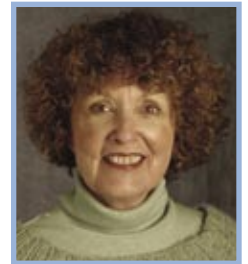
Demsky went on to receive a double degree in organizational management and management and human resources at Bethel College in 1992 and a masters in library science degree from Indiana University South Bend in 1994.

Besides being the only Seventh-day Adventist architecture librarian in the world, Demsky also holds a permanent position on the board of directors of Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA) as publications coordinator. The AU Architecture Resource Center's EDRA collection is the most comprehensive compilation in the world.

Demsky is also an assistant professor. She has helped organize the architecture department's study abroad program and has taught a class on Waldensian faith and history.

Demsky accounts her success to God's blessings, and a quote from Psalm 18 lines the top of her office wall in bold black letters, reminding her that "By my God I can leap a wall."

Beverly Stout, University Relations news writer



Kathy Demsky, director of the AU Architecture Resource Center